



ACT
Government

2026 ACT Youth Week Grant Program

Grant Guidelines

Applications open: 12 noon Wednesday 3 September 2025

Applications close: 3pm Tuesday 9 December 2025

Accessibility Information

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- If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an **alternative format** – such as large print or audio – please telephone **13 34 27**.
- If English is not your first language and you require the **translating and interpreting services** – please telephone **13 14 50**.
- If you are d/Deaf or find it hard to hear or speak to hearing people on the phone, visit the **National Relay Service (NRS)** at www.accesshub.gov.au

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2026 ACT Youth Week Grant Program

1 Introduction

The Health and Community Services Directorate is pleased to announce the opening of the 2026 ACT Youth Week Grant Program (the Grants or the Grant Program).

ACT Youth Week is an annual, celebration of young people aged 12 to 25 years.

The 2026 ACT Youth Week will be held from Monday 13 April 2026 to Friday 24 April 2026.

ACT Youth Week provides young people with the opportunity to express their ideas and views, and act on issues that impact on them and their peers. It is also a time to celebrate, have fun and highlight the positive contributions young people make to their community.

2 Aim

This grant program aims to support youth-led initiatives that promote community engagement among young people aged 12 to 25 years in the ACT.. Funding is available for innovative projects that empower young individuals to design, lead and deliver events and activities for their peers.

on youth participation and encourage young people to develop, implement and facilitate youth focused projects in the ACT community.

3 Government objectives

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led organisations and people are encouraged to apply.

Consistent with the objectives of the grant program, funding for projects, activities or initiatives that contribute towards closing the gap on disadvantage between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Canberrans will be prioritised.

This is part of the ACT Government's commitment to Closing the Gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As outlined in the [ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement](#), the ACT Government and community partners are committed to self-determination as the guiding principle in the delivery of programs and services.

ACT Health and Wellbeing

Projects and initiatives must demonstrate how they address any of the ACT Health and Wellbeing Framework outcomes. The framework outlines key outcomes that support a thriving community including connection, safety, identity and learning.

For more information, visit the [ACT Wellbeing Framework website](#).

4 Eligibility requirements

Who can apply?

- Individuals
- Organisations
- Partnerships of individuals

Profit making groups, government entities that are not an educational institution and registered political parties are not eligible to apply.

Applicants can apply only once in the 2026 round.

Applicants must have no overdue acquittal obligations for any previous Health and Community Services Directorate grant.

All outstanding acquittals must be completed prior to submitting an application.

Individual eligibility requirements

Individuals can apply if they:

- Reside in the ACT (a copy of an ACT Driver License or Proof of Identity Card, or proof of residency stating their current address must be provided)
- Have not received funding from another source to deliver or provide the same or similar project/program
- Have no overdue acquittal obligations for any previous Health and Community Services Directorate grant. **All outstanding acquittals must be completed prior to submitting an application.**
- Have appropriate insurance (public liability, professional indemnity or other appropriate insurance) to undertake the activity or event. Evidence will be required prior to receiving the grant funding.

Applicants under the age of 18 must have permission from their parent/guardian/carer before submitting their application.

Partnerships of individuals eligibility requirements

Groups or Partnerships of Individuals can apply if they:

- List the roles and responsibilities of each group member or organisation
- Clarify who will take the lead, lodge the application, and submit the final acquittal
- Have an organisation, parent or guardian undertake the obligations of the Letter of Offer, receive the funds, and distribute them as per the Letter of Offer. This is to take the form of a letter of support.

Organisation eligibility requirements

Organisations can apply if they:

- Operate in the ACT
- Are a legally incorporated entity or supported by an incorporated auspicing organisation
- Are a registered not-for-profit or a charitable organisation
- Are an educational institution (ACT Government school, independent school, private school, Catholic school, tertiary or vocational institution- public, private or independent)
- Have no overdue acquittal obligations for any previous Health and Community Services Directorate grant. **All outstanding acquittals must be completed prior to submitting an application.**
- Have not received funding from another source to deliver or provide the same or similar project/program
- Have an appropriate insurance cover held by the organisation implementing a funded project. This may include Public Liability of no less than \$10 million, Personal Accident, Volunteer Cover and or Directors Professional Indemnity. Evidence of insurance may be required as a condition of the grant.

Auspicing arrangements

If you are a community group or organisation that is not legally incorporated (unincorporated) then you may ask an incorporated association to auspice an application on your behalf.

An auspicing body is an organisation that accepts the legal responsibility including financial accountability for a project. If your organisation is not a legal entity, you will need to arrange for an organisation that has legal status to act as an auspicing body.

The auspicing organisation must provide a letter of support with the application stating they will:

- Be the applicant for this grant funding and if successful contract directly with the Health and Community Services Directorate for the receipt of grant funding, and comply with all grant funding contractual obligations, including the provision of financial acquittal documentation
- Be the entity that will accept the grant funding for the project and administer the funding in accordance with the Grant Guidelines and Letter of Offer

- Disburse grant funding to the auspiced party in accordance with the Grant Guidelines and Letter of Offer and not unreasonably withhold funding from the auspiced party for the implementation of the project.

5 Funding

Available funding

The total funding available under this Program is \$20,000.

The maximum grant an individual or partnership can apply for is \$2,000.

As there are no goods or services being exchanged, and the grant is intended as a contribution, GST is not applicable to grant payments.

The value is for one project or initiative only and is non-recurring.

Successful recipients must spend the grant funding and acquit the grant by 31 July 2026, which is within 3 months of the 2026 Youth Week events.

NOTE: Youth Week projects, events and activities must be delivered during the 2026 ACT Youth Week from 13 April 2026 to 24 April 2026.

6 Priority areas for funding

The 2026 ACT Youth Week Grants Program has 3 priority areas for projects and initiatives:

Young people aged 12 to 25 years leading or being involved in the development and implementation of the project, event, or activity

Promoting and celebrating young people's diversity

Strengthening and building community connections

Increasing opportunities for young people to develop skills, leadership and confidence to actively participate in their community

7 Project details

Activities and events **must** take place during the 2026 ACT Youth Week which runs from Monday 13 April 2026 to Friday 24 April 2026. There are many ways that projects, events, or forums could be facilitated to enable young people aged 12 to 25 years old to lead and participate in community development activities. For example:

- Building supportive connections between community members using sport, recreation, cultural and creative activities, and events
- Organising and running events
- Increasing opportunities for young people to participate in local community events, activities, and youth related causes
- Recognising the contribution that young people make to their local communities

- Increasing opportunities for young people through the development of leadership skills, project management skills, networking encounters plus teamwork, communication, and decision-making skills.

If an agency or organisation is delivering the project, the application will need to demonstrate that young people are taking a lead role.

2026 ACT Youth Week Grants will only be provided to eligible applicants whose proposal meets one or more of the following:

- Encourages a range of young people to get involved in their local community and increases their personal and professional development
- Involves young people at all levels of organisation and management
- Is supported by and involves the local community
- Is led by young people when an activity/event/project is supported by an agency/organisation.

Proposals for events must provide a safe, smoke, alcohol, and drug free environment, and should be free to attend.

Project eligibility

Eligible projects must:

- Provide a service/program which will be located primarily in the ACT and primarily for the benefit of ACT residents
- Outline how the program will primarily benefit ACT residents
- Include all supporting documentation needed for the application.

Funding cannot be used for

The following will not be funded:

- Projects that do not contribute to or meet the aims and priority areas of this program or are not delivered during the 2026 Youth Week (Monday 13 April to Friday 24 April 2026)
- Projects that are not delivered primarily within the ACT or benefits the ACT community
- Projects requiring ongoing funding to sustain the project or activity
- Projects or activities already funded by the ACT Government or Australian Government, or where alternative funding is available
- Projects that are a duplication of, or in parallel with an existing service, program, project, or event
- Commercial and fundraising projects and events

- General administration and operational costs such as salaries, memberships, subscription fees, communication and IT, stationery, rent, leasing, utilities, machinery, vehicles or large capital equipment of any kind
 - Fees cannot be paid to staff who are already salaried employees of the organisations delivering the project or event
- Items not declared in the grant application and therefore unapproved
- Costs of projects or activities that have already taken place, or items already purchased
- Operational insurance costs specific to the project
- Activities for or by a political party
- Debt repayments of any kind
- Any travel or accommodation costs
- Prize money or gifts
- Activities that contain content that may offend or bring into disrepute the applicant organisation, the Health and Community Services Directorate and/or the ACT Government
- Activities that do not comply with public safety requirements or meet relevant Australian Government legislative requirements
- Projects which are deemed to be inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory.

8 Assessment of applications

When your application is received it will be checked against these Grant Guidelines to ensure eligibility for funding.

Assessment process

Following the eligibility check, the Grant Assessment Team will assess your application. The Grant Assessment Team will include a chairperson and another senior officer within the Health and Community Services Directorate and may include a representative from the ACT Youth Advisory Council. Grant Assessment Team members will be appointed based on their knowledge of ACT Youth Week and young people in the ACT.

Successful applications may not receive an offer for the full amount applied for. The Grant Assessment Team will review and adjust the level of allocated funding as necessary.

Grant Assessment Team members will use the information provided in your application and information from any previous Health and Community Services Directorate grant rounds to assess the applications submitted. If you have been successful in other recent grants rounds, the Grant Assessment Team may take this into consideration during their assessment where there are a high number of applications received to ensure fairness across all applicants.

All decisions on whether to award a grant, or on the amount of any grant, are at the sole discretion of the Health and Community Services Directorate.

Assessment criteria for applications

Due to the competitive process, all eligible applications will be assessed and prioritised by the Grant Assessment Team against the following assessment criteria:

- **Alignment:** The application demonstrates that the project, event, or activity aligns with one or more of the four priority areas of the Grant Program: youth-led initiatives, diversity, community connections, and/or skills and leadership development.
- **Youth Led:** The proposal involves young people in the development and delivery/implementation of the project (for example, led by young people when a project is supported by an organisation).
- **Contribution:** The application demonstrates strengthening and promoting community inclusion and social connection.
- **Budget:** The application demonstrates that the project, event, or activity has a realistic timeframe; and the budget is based on sound cost estimates, is realistic, clearly details all the proposed expenditure for the project and demonstrates value for money.

A budget is an estimate of income and expenditure required to complete your project. You will need to provide a budget with your application. This needs to show the funding breakdown for different items.

In some cases, due to the high demand for grants only partial funding can be offered. Therefore, you will need to consider if you can proceed with your project if only part-funding is offered.

If you have applied for another grant for this same project, please ensure this is explained in your application.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Notification of outcome

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing via email.

The Health and Community Services Directorate expects to notify applicants of the outcome of their applications in early February 2026. Between the grant round closing and receiving an outcome letter, applicants may not hear anything from the CSD Grants team.

Unfortunately, not all applications can be funded as there are usually more applications received than funds available. This does not necessarily mean that the project or application is not worthy. It is more likely that other project applications were ranked higher in the assessment process.

If you would like feedback on your application, please see the 'Application Feedback' section.

9 Accepting a grant

Grant Agreement

Successful applicants will be required to enter into an Agreement. This will be via a Letter of Offer with the Health and Community Services Directorate for which Grant funding will be provided. The Letter of Offer will include:

- How to accept an offer
- Detail the grant amount to be funded
- Detail the purpose or activity for which the grant is given
- The term of the funded activity for which the grant amount must be fully expended
- How to acquit the grant funds when the project has been completed.

The ACT Government does not carry any responsibility for the activities undertaken by grant recipients.

Funds must be spent only on items and activities listed in your application. The Letter of Offer may have conditions of what the funding can and cannot be spent on.

Changes to project

A grant is funded based on the details of your application only. If something changes due to unexpected circumstances, you must first obtain written approval from the Health and Community Services Directorate. Your request to change the project will be reviewed by the Delegate and you will be advised in writing if the request is approved or declined. Failure to seek approval to change the purpose can result in non-conformance and may result in you having to return the full grant amount that was paid by the Health and Community Services Directorate.

Acknowledging support

Grant Recipients must ensure the assistance provided by the ACT Government is appropriately acknowledged in any promotional or other materials. The ACT Government's Branding Guidelines and "Supported By" logo are accessible at:

[Design and Brand Guidelines - ACT Government](#)

Grant and project promotion

The names, project descriptions and funding amounts of all successful applications will be posted on the ACT Government Grants website following completion of the grant process. By accepting a grant, you agree to this and to the ACT Government Media team contacting you to discuss publishing a story on how the grant was used.

Event promotion requirement

All funded projects must be promoted at least four weeks before ACT Youth Week and

provide the ACT Youth Engagement team with the promotional link—either to your organisation’s website or an event page.

The promotional link must include:

- Event date and time
- Location
- Whether the event is ticketed or free access (*note: all ACT Youth Week–funded events must be free to attend*)
- Any relevant registration link

Even if the event is intended for a specific community group or has limited participant numbers, it should still be promoted on a free public platform. This ensures more members of the ACT community are aware of ACT Youth Week activities, even if attendance is by registration or invitation only.

If you do not want your name published, or to be contacted by the ACT Government Media Team, please let the CSD Grants Team know when you accept your grant.

10 Acquittal and reporting requirements

All successful applicants must expend the funds within the timeframes nominated in the Letter of Offer.

An acquittal is a signed declaration, submitted at the end of the activity, stating that funding was used for the agreed purpose. This includes providing copies of receipts as proof of expenditure.

Acquittal process

The acquittal of the grant must be submitted through SmartyGrants at:

<http://dhcs.SmartyGrants.com.au>

Instructions will be provided to successful applicants in their Letter of Offer. You will need to login using the same identification details you used to submit the application. Please keep this in a safe place.

The funds must be expended in accordance with the activity/project outlined in the grant application and in the Letter of Offer, and all receipts must be retained and submitted with the acquittal.

Unspent funds

Any unspent funds from your grant must be returned to Health and Community Services Directorate. Please email the CSD Grants team at CSDGrants@act.gov.au to advise of any unspent funds.

Please note: *To be eligible for funding in any future Health and Community Services Directorate grants rounds, applicants must meet all acquittal requirements.*

11 Application submission

Online Application Form

Now that you have read the Grant Guidelines, this section explains how to submit your application on SmartyGrants. All applications must be submitted via the online application form at:

<https://dhcs.smartygrants.com.au/2026YWG>

All applications must be submitted online. Hardcopy or email applications will not be accepted.

If you require assistance to complete your application, please contact the Youth Engagement team at: youth.interact@act.gov.au

Start early – the process of preparing a grant application depends on how well you have planned the activity for which you are applying. You can start this process long before you start and submit an application.

If you have never prepared a proposal or written a grant application, we suggest you take some time to understand the process and reach out for assistance if you need it. You will find lots of tips on the SmartyGrants website –

<http://help.smartygrants.com.au/display/help/Help+Guide+for+Applicants>

Start gathering your support materials. These might be quotes, or website details. You can never have enough evidence to support an application, so long as it is relevant to the activity to be funded.

Create log in

You will need to create a log in to begin your application and you may begin anywhere in the application form. Please make sure you save as you go.

Navigating form

On the right-hand side of every screen, there is a box which links directly to every page of the application. Click on any page to jump directly to that page. You can also click 'next page' or 'previous page' on the top or bottom of each page to move forward or backward through the application.

Saving draft

You can press 'save' at any point and log out. When you log back in, your draft application will be saved, and you can start where you left off.

Submitting application

The submit button is on the final page. You will not be able to submit your application until all the questions are completed. Once your application has been submitted, you cannot make further changes to it.

Supporting documentation

All applicants must provide supporting documentation at the time of submission.

If your application does not include all the required documentation, it may be deemed ineligible.

SmartyGrants provides an online help guide for applicants. This guide will explain the essential steps you need to take to complete and submit your form. The help guide is accessible at:

<http://help.smartygrants.com.au/display/help/Help+Guide+for+Applicants>

Correct contact details

Please make sure that the contact details listed in your application form are correct. The Health and Community Services Directorate will use this information for all correspondence relating to your application.

Completing application as a group/team

Several people can work on an application using the same login details provided that only 1 person is working on the application at any given time. Please ensure you save as you go.

Save application

It is recommended that you keep a copy of your application for your records as well as your application ID number (e.g., 2026YWGxx). You can print a copy of your completed online application or save it as a PDF.

12 Application feedback

Providing feedback

Applicants are encouraged to complete the feedback questions at the end of the application form. This feedback assists to improve grant programs, processes, and service delivery. You can also email feedback to the CSD Grants team at CSDGrants@act.gov.au.

Requesting feedback

The Health and Community Services Directorate supports your right to ask questions about the grant application process. If your application has not been successful, email the CSD Grants team at CSDGrants@act.gov.au, quoting your application ID number and outlining your specific concerns. The Health and Community Services Directorate will provide a response as soon as possible.

This information also assists to improve grant programs, processes, and service delivery.